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ABSTRACT

This is a review of films in six thematic groupings: (1) The Open Classroom on Film, (2) The Developing Child, (3) Readiness and the Natural Abilities of Children, (4) Schools as Mirrors, (5) Families: Weavers of Civilization, (6) Children: The Legacy. Each review describes strengths and weaknesses, and gives guidance for follow-up usage. All films are indexed by title and identified by distributors' names, date of release, rental cost, length, and availability in black and white or color. The introduction suggests sources of films and criteria for selecting them; it also provides suggestions on using film for educational purposes. (Author/DAG)

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Films for Childhood Educators

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Contents

	Introduction—Mariann Pezzella Winick	3
1	The Open Classroom on Film*	5
2	The Developing Child: A Cinematic View	8
3	Readiness and the Natural Abilities of Children	11
4	Schools as Mirrors	14
5	Families: Weavers of Civilization	18
6	Children: The Legacy	21

* This review column and those that follow are reprinted from the November/December 1975, February 1976, April/May 1976, October 1976, January 1977 and March 1977 issues, respectively, of CHILDHOOD EDUCATION.

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Introduction

Film: A Provocative Teaching Medium

About fifteen years ago I was asked to serve as a film juror; this experience proved to be the beginning of a long encounter with educational films. Yearly since then I have made a concentrated effort to view a wide variety of current films in both child development and teacher training. Attending film showings at national meetings has helped provide extended coverage.

As a teacher educator, one of my major goals has long been to find distinctive, provocative ways of meeting the needs of varied learning groups. Initially, I sought to put to use ideas seen on film. As I became more knowledgeable, I sought to choreograph the films themselves into other learning experiences. In both undergraduate and graduate classes, and with parent and community groups engaged in the study of child development, I have found that film offers an incomparable medium for developing good observational techniques. Through film, field trips can be taken to distant schools and a range of other settings. Although the eye of the viewer is forced to follow the eye of the camera, no two viewers see exactly the same thing! Insights gained from viewing can be developed further through follow-up discussion and recommended readings. Films can help uncover individual attitudes and modes of thought.

In time I developed a resource bibliography of films that became the basis for a graduate course on *Current Trends in Early Childhood Education*. My choices for films used in this course were based on content veracity, esthetic considerations, cinematic quality (sound-visual), and general level of relevance as compared with text materials.

I was delighted to receive an invitation in 1975 from Monroe Cohen, editor of CHILDHOOD EDUCATION, journal of the Association for Childhood Education International, to prepare a bimonthly film review. Reproduced herein are the first six review columns, covering the period from November/December 1975 through March 1977. As background for utilization of these reviews, I would like to offer a few words of counsel.

How To Choose Films

Choosing films requires forethought. Here are some guidelines that may prove helpful in selection:

1) Have clear-cut utilization goals in mind. Verify that these goals are met. Study the descriptions that are generally available from distributors. Reviews and word-of-mouth recommendations often offer good leads. Make use of your own past experience with related films.

2) Remember that short films (under 27 minutes) can be of greater value than long ones, since discussion should immediately follow film usage.

3) Try whenever possible to match cinematic style with audience receptivity. Despite the value of the subject matter, a poorly made film can

detract from interest rather than add to it. Some films labeled "educational" are neither informative nor worth the expenditure of viewing-time.

Where To Get Films

Today film distributors are located in many parts of the United States. On request, the Educational Film Library Association (72 West 60th Street, New York, New York 10023) can provide addresses of any distributor. Many college and public libraries have distributor catalogs on file; these libraries may also have their own film rental facilities. Social service agencies and Head Start regional training offices often have films for local use. Letterhead purchase orders or official letters requesting specific information will facilitate prompt answers to your requests. To save time and long-distance mailing costs, be sure to check local sources first for film availability.

To play it safe, it is wise to order a film as far in advance as possible; eight weeks prior to your proposed showing-date is a good guide. On the initial request, give alternative dates for use; doing so saves time and correspondence.

Using Films

1) When the film arrives, arrange to screen it *prior to* its intended use. The wrong film may have been sent, it may be wound backwards, the film may be broken and require splicing, or—the unbelievable—the film container may be empty! Pre-screening enables you to familiarize yourself with the content in order to plan wise utilization. You may decide *not* to use the film, or to use only a segment of it.

2) Again, make sure you have a clear purpose for showing the film. Viewers quickly respond negatively to a wasted 20 minutes, even if the film is colorful and entertaining.

3) Help focus your audience with a short introduction to the film. In follow-up, small-group discussions or a panel-presentation to a large group, with some directing questions, are useful ways to engage thought and provide for closure.

4) Use some films for individualized experiences, with special planning through audiovisual sources. Have a set of guidelines for use available on-site for such purposes.

5) Consider using part of department and school budgets to purchase especially useful films. Films such as *Blockbuilding* are usable over long periods of time. Having films on hand also facilitates their innovative use within programs; e.g., individualized learning, sharing with community groups, use on instructional television.

Carefully chosen and wisely utilized, film can indeed be a provocative, compelling teaching medium.

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1.

Films

Mariann Pezzella Winick

THE OPEN CLASSROOM ON FILM

DURING THE EARLY 1960s Great Britain's primary schools were evaluated and recommendations for reformation of the system were embodied in the justly acclaimed Plowden Report (first issued in 1967). The direction of change established was toward an opening of the curriculum and of teaching procedures and an integration of children within broader age groups—in marked contrast with the prevalent age-term-oriented program.

In the United States the term "open classroom" became a descriptive label of such innovation. By the late 1960s American educators laden with the increasingly difficult task of providing effective learning situations for ever larger numbers of children looked toward the functioning informal classrooms of Great Britain. A small group of British educators had been working with the educational application of the work of Jean Piaget during this period and were able to provide leadership in such synthesis of theory with practice.

One of the earliest films to attempt to document these changes is *Infants School* by Lillian Weber, who is now Director of the Workshop Center for Open Education (City College of the City University of New York). Professor Weber culminated a year-long study of English infant schools by selecting one of them, Gordonbrook, for a day's filming. Because this school was in an old building, it could provide many educators with an easily identifiable setting. The film visit is not selective but kaleidoscopic, utilizing a cinema verité technique. It requires that the viewer be very attentive, a task that is often difficult since the film's soundtrack and visuals tend to distract rather than focus attention. For several years this film was the only one of its nature available in the United States for those unable to visit British schools. With adequate preparation of the audience and follow-up discussion, it is still a film that can stimulate.

Among the newer films, *Task of the Teacher* is the most comprehensively organized. It seeks to clarify the role of the teacher in an open setting. A long film (43 minutes), it includes a great deal more than the detailed view of the teacher at work as the chief learning resource in the classroom. In fact, a discussion leader must have a very clear idea of the purpose for showing the film or much of its richness can be lost in tangential discussion. The photography is excellent, the soundtrack a bit distracting (a pedantic lecture technique is used). Viewers to whom I have shown the film have been particularly impressed by the sense of regard for children shown by the adults—as revealed not only in overt behavior but in the quality of preparedness and the appropriateness of learning experiences provided for and developed with the children. This careful planning is in marked contrast to the "improvisation" quality often ascribed to open classroom programs. Many viewers find the independent functioning of the children with sophisticated apparatus and concepts a revelation.

tending to highlight the distance between what they "know" from child development study and what they are able to ascribe to children in actual situations. Such distances can be transversed through the use of films such as *Task of the Teacher*. Here it is possible to realize that openness has far more to do with the development of the child and the extension of thought than with the use of space.

A negative reaction frequently heard when British films are viewed is a discounting of the film's possibilities on the basis of a "fairy tale" quality seemingly inherent in sight and sound of ordered school situations. This complaint points up one of the problems in working with films. Many viewers for some reason apparently believe that educational films should be spontaneous, "telling it like it is." But to communicate a sense of spontaneity requires very careful selection, and the presentation for thirty minutes of a situation with some focus can hardly be effected without skillful editing. Undoubtedly crying, whining, angry children are frequently cut out of films as are children busily engaged in simple tasks. I find it a point of concern that for younger teachers the activities viewed in films such as this have no touchpoints in their current situations or past education. One can only hope for and seek to provide for educational experiences that will provide them hope for the future and make faith in children a reality rather than a myth.

A companion film, *Children Are People*, which focuses on the organization of children in infant and primary settings, is an earlier attempt to bring the purposes of such curriculum change into focus. Useful with both films is a parallel reading of the book, *Family Grouping in the Primary School*, by Lorna Ridgway. Since she wrote and directed the films, her ideas therein can be pursued at leisure in this well-written text. Both of these films are of particular value in focusing on the role of the teacher and curriculum in extending educational possibilities; they each show more than a half dozen different school situations. They can best serve the needs of professionals in advanced teacher training or retraining, however, rather than be used with lay audiences as an introduction to the informal classroom.

If the purpose is to introduce the viewer to the idea of the family grouping approach (whereby children are placed in extended age groups rather than in discrete grades), then I recommend showing *Primary Education in Great Britain*, a modest but well-presented film. This film is short, well photographed and edited. The "fairy tale" quality is present but lessened somewhat by the film's brevity and the fine quality of its narration. A well-rounded picture of the basis and possibilities of such a setting is provided. This can be a most encouraging film for groups contemplating new directions.

It is not to be confused with *Primary Adventure*, which is quite long and attempts to provide views of schools in Britain in the process of change. The voice-over narration of the latter film is quite heavy; the length (42 minutes) makes it a very difficult one to use properly. As an introductory film it includes far too much, without the focus of either *Task of the Teacher* or *Children Are People* for curriculum use. Its attractiveness for some audiences is the diversity of settings, many of which appear to be far closer to older urban settings known to some viewers.

A trilogy—*Battling Brook Primary School: Four Days in September*, *Medbourne Primary School: Four Days in May*, and *Westfield Infant School*—are low-key films. Photographed mostly in black-and-white and quite short (total running time is 46 minutes), they can be used to very good advantage in giving viewers in-depth though brief studies of three locales. Each film presents primary-aged children in naturalistic settings over a period of time. The films are short enough individually to allow making the most of discussion time. If all three are used, they should be spaced over more than one session to maximize their effectiveness. Again, professional audiences would find them most valuable.

As the informal education movement has progressed in the United States, more American films have become available. Two recent films are *British Infant Schools—Southern Style* and *They All Learn*. The first, which offers both British and American settings, can be most useful with community boards, parent and teacher groups interested in the conditions of change—renovation of space, teacher reorientation, public relations, etc.—since it offers views of before and after. While the film features many scenes of children at work, it tends toward an overriding quality of salesmanship that appears a bit biased at times. This problem can be handled by effective follow-up discussion, which should draw out more "I wonder why" than "I wish" responses.

They All Learn stays within an American setting. It is a far-sweeping view of the mobilization of a South Carolina county, Williamsburg, as it coalesces to meet the educational needs of a predominantly rural population. This film is a semi-documentary with a strong emphasis on the possibilities for using open education in a rural system. Very useful as a means to help decision-makers face the problems of change, it can also act as a form of encouragement to teachers who are unable to identify with the more remote British settings.

Several teacher-training series have been made by BBC/TV in Great Britain, related to the new teaching methods. Each series is composed of half-hour films covering separate topics, which are available separately. All are very well made. While the content in each film is compressed, it is possible to get an attractive look at possibilities. The ten films of the *Discovery and Experience* series deal with specific curriculum topics ("Math Is a Monster," "Our Own Music," etc.) and with child development (e.g., "How Do Children Think?"). The series on *The Expanding Classroom* provides visits to eight different schools. The *Mother Tongue* series, which deals with stages of learning, can be of particular value in clarifying the basis for methodologies within classrooms. Composed of both interviews and flashbacks to actual descriptive classroom situations, the films cover a breadth of materials in most illuminating fashion. These films could also be used with parents or professional curriculum study groups to help clarify feelings and attitudes toward language development, especially with regard to reading and writing instruction in schools. For communities having public-access channels, educational groups might find the airing of such series a stimulating way to help taxpayers understand educational possibilities.

You may find it curious for us to end a review of current films about open classroom settings with praise for a film over twenty-five years old. However, more than nostalgia requires that *Passion for Life* be included. This French film tells the story of a World War I veteran-turned-teacher facing the reality of his own philosophy of education and life, the pressures of the community, the weight of an entrenched system, the disparateness of the parents, and most of all the needs of all of the children as he opens up his classroom. Were it not for the clothing and the setting, one can hardly believe that this film is not dealing with current problems. I have found its impact on students is always very strong. The film has an added value in that it gives a strong historical base for current innovations. I am frequently caught by the fact that so many teachers and students have no idea of the educational revolution carried on in the United States prior to World War II. The period of the activity-movement and other progressive programs in classrooms and schools across this country seems to have been buried with time. Yet this was a flourishing era when educators from Russia, China and Europe visited the schools of the United States to see such innovation. Though many books are available telling of such work, no other film that I know of does so as well as this one. *Passion for Life* helps to make such past glory part of current thought.

Films and Sources

BATTLING BROOK PRIMARY SCHOOL. 23 min., color. $115, $15 rental. Newton, MA: Educational Development Center, 1972.

THE BRITISH INFANT SCHOOL—SOUTHERN STYLE. 30 min., color. $350, $35 rental. New York: Agathon Press. Birmingham, AL: Promethean Films South, 1973.

CHILDREN ARE PEOPLE. 42 min., color. $450, $45 rental. New York: Agathon Press, 1972.

INFANTS SCHOOL (Lillian Weber). 32 min., b/w. $150, $15 rental. Newton, MA: Educational Development Center, circa 1967.

MEDBOURNE PRIMARY SCHOOL. 12 min., b/w. $65, $10 rental. Newton, MA: Educational Development Center, 1968.

PASSION FOR LIFE. 85 min., b/w. $395, $32.50 rental. Mt. Vernon, NY: Brandon Films, 1948.

PRIMARY ADVENTURE. 42 min., color. $375, $30 rental. New York: New York University, 1970.

PRIMARY EDUCATION IN GREAT BRITAIN. 17 min., color. $15 rental. New York: New York University, 1971.

TASK OF THE TEACHER. 43 min., color. $450, $45 rental. New York: Agathon Press, 1973.

THEY ALL LEARN. 28 min., color. $350, $35 rental. Birmingham, AL: Promethean Films South, 1974.

WESTFIELD INFANT SCHOOL. 11 min., b/w. $60, $10 rental. Newton, MA: Educational Development Center, 1968.

SERIES (ALL FROM TIME-LIFE FILMS, NEW YORK CITY)

DISCOVERY AND EXPERIENCE. 10 films, 30 min. each, b/w, n.d. $2000 for series, $250 per film, $250 rental for series, $30 rental per film.

THE EXPANDING CLASSROOM. 8 films, 30 min. each, b/w, n.d. $1500 for series, $250 per film, $200 rental for series, $30 rental per film.

MOTHER TONGUE. 5 films, 30 min. each, b/w, n.d. $1000 for series, $250 per film, $125 rental for series, $30 rental per film.

2.

THE DEVELOPING CHILD: A CINEMATIC VIEW

CHILDREN cannot stop developing, yet we are often so close to them that we do not see this growth. Films offer the viewer controlled material that can facilitate building specific developmental knowledge and aid in improving observation skills. Through films we can see longitudinal development within a compressed period of time.

For example, within the hour and forty-seven minutes of the series, *A Long Time To Grow*, we see children grow from two through eight years of age. Though this series is old, only the dresses and some of the language appear dated. The content developed by Stone and Church is still valid and most useful. I have found that students in urban centers frequently comment on the lack of integration and the atypicalness of the nonurban setting; however, when field work complements use of the films the view of children developing emerges as relevant.

Earlier films, *Life with Baby* and *Life Begins*, represent the pioneering efforts of Dr. Arnold Gesell at the Yale Clinic of Child Development. These films can provide ballast for a great deal in attempting to understand the work of Piaget. A more recent film dealing with development is *How Babies Learn*. Cinematically interesting, it records some of the work of Dr. Bettye Caldwell at Syracuse University, with a focus on the relationship of the emerging infant to significant others.

The Conscience of a Child is a somewhat hurried film (it may have been a TV program) that attempts to bring together recent techniques in the study of growth and personality in children. It provides help in understanding ways data can be integrated.

Two British series, *Children Growing Up* and *The Springs of Learning*, offer a carefully orchestrated view of development. Each of the fifteen films can be used singly to advantage. The first series deals with physical and emotional development, the second with intellectual development. These black-and-white films, averaging thirty minutes each, were made for educational use on BBC. They would be of value on public access or local TV stations since they provide well-presented content and views of children engaged in the process of growth.

Aspects of Socialization

One of the most significant areas of study in human growth and development is socialization. *The World of Three* is a low-key black-and-white film that helps bring the socializing aspect of the mother's role into sharp focus. The daily routines of a three-year-old boy and his mother at home and outdoors are revealed in a unique way through the camera's eye. The camera is held low and we begin to see things from the child's eye level. Part of the family is a new baby, who provides useful material for follow-up discussion related to jealousy and sibling rivalry. The cinema verité quality is provocative, and feelings run high in ensuing discussions. This film is of particular value as it illuminates the shift in the mothering one's role from nurturer to socializer — a dynamic transition too frequently neglected in the literature.

Nursery school experiences provide young children with an opportunity to test being part of a group. *First Friends* attempts to capture the movement of young children toward each other as they extend the boundaries of self to include less familiar others. The film is in color; the settings are natural. It might have been desirable to include conversations of the children; the voice-over narration is frequently very distracting. This film lends itself to discussion of a variety of topics: aggressiveness, conscience, fantasy and imagination. It focuses on the reality that "the child cannot stop developing" and affords much to respond to. The beginnings of peer-testing emerges in scene after scene. We see children testing how far they can go without getting into trouble. One shortcoming of the film can be considered serious: adult supervision seems ambiguous; limits are not at all clear to the viewer. Since the role the adult takes in helping children recognize limits is frequently

obscure, the model provided may well raise questions. To develop a plan for guided discussion that can help clarify impressions and probe further the possibilities offered, a preview is strongly recommended.

Peers in Middle Childhood is a rare film. Shot on location at the Shelter Rock School, Danbury, Connecticut, it deals with nine-year-olds, who are at a peak of peer-group maturation. The class is racially integrated. Voice-over narration is balanced with the sounds of some of the responses and conversations of the children. The camera work is occasionally cloudy and a bit distracting, but the content is excellent. This film deals with another step in the process of socialization. Attitudes toward school work, competition, winning, challenges as they related to one's growing sense of self and well-being are meaningfully presented on the screen. Thus, viewers are provided with excellent material for further development through related readings, observations and discussions.

These three films offer a great deal in terms of a better understanding of the developmental nature of the process of socialization. They can be used with parent groups at class meetings to help them better understand the attitudes and feelings of the child moving from the boundaries of the home into the world of others.

Dealing with Sex Roles

If you are looking for a film that deals with sex roles as they relate to the quality of socializing experiences provided children at home and in schools, *Sugar and Spice* may prove very helpful. Made in 1974, it offers a presentation that is lively (too lively at times) and intriguing. A variety of settings is used: the Educational Alliance Preschool in New York City; the Children's Center in Brookline, Massachusetts; and the Woodward School in Brooklyn. We are enabled to view children in active situations and hear their voices. The provision of teacher and parent sessions gives us the possibility of being participant-observers. One memorable sequence involves a teacher and several four-year-old girls sitting outdoors. One girl mentions that her mother is a doctor. Another child insists this is impossible and laughingly says: "Womans can't be doctors, I think that's funny." The teacher explains that it is indeed possible and tells the girls of a planned trip to a hospital for the afternoon. The next scene is a jolly one (a good bit of giggling is heard) as the doubter sets her stethoscope to another child's chest under the guidance of a woman doctor. A male nurse is also present, lending added space for contemplation for these youngsters. While the film suffers from occasionally poor camera work (scenes are in and out of focus), its content is stimulating. This film can be used effectively with student teachers, inservice teachers and parent groups.

Two films, *I Is for Important* and *Anything They Want To Be*—made specifically as protocol materials at the Far West Laboratory for Research and Development—deal with sex-role bias. These films do not have a narrated track but do come with a handbook, *In All Fairness*, which provides very structured material: exposition, main points and instructional activities, scene-by-scene, as well as a thorough summary of recent research on sex-role differentiation. These films can be quite effective in helping students clarify roles and bias. Since they are protocols, however, each one deals with a very small area, offering a limited and focused record of behavior. Most effective when used as parts of a planned learning experience that one would like to quantify, they would not have the broad utility of the more generalized *Sugar and Spice*.

The Pleasures of Play

Play offers splendid opportunities to observe and study the child. An interesting range of films can be found that explore the dimensions of childhood through this activity. *Outdoor Play—A Motivating Force in Learning* is a highly organized film. It is part of a series coordinated at the Queens College Early Childhood Center by Professor Mary Moffitt, who brings an extensive weight of knowledge and research to the clarification of early childhood practices. Children and adults are seen in active situations—painting, playing with sand, climbing, dancing, constructing, etc. One scene involving several children and the teacher in attempts to move a log provides a great deal of "live" material for a clear understanding of problem-solving. Here is a didactic film that can easily provide guided observational experiences of enormous value.

Pizza, Pizza-Daddy-O and *One Potato, Two Potato* are very different films. In them we see

older children (7-13) engage in peer play related to street games and chants. Both films (one is American, the other British) bring the rich content of the Opie's study on *The Lore and Language of Children* to viewers in an often personally nostalgic and touching way.

Another type of film dealing with play activity relates to settings for such activity. Viewers of *Adventure Playground* and *Playground* often find themselves uncomfortably threatened by their own feelings and attitudes as they discuss the implications of such play space. The playgrounds observed are built by the children with adult supervision and are a far cry from the architect-designed adventure playgrounds usually found in the United States. Both films include playgrounds in foreign countries. It is quite interesting to see the independence and "derring-do" of the children as they engage in personally meaningful play.

Dealing with Children's Fears

A very special view of children's fears can be found in a few short films of recent vintage. These films utilize drawings, writings and play activities to bring the child's eye view into adult focus. *Growing Up in a Scary World* reveals the concerns of four- and five-year-olds in the spring of 1970 as they play in a sandbox. The spontaneous-play activity provides insight into how children experience hospitalization, power, even destruction. The way social relations aid or abet one's stability is shown through the interplay of several pairs of children. *A Child's Eyes: November 22, 1963* is a small revelation. Through the crayon drawings of five- and six-year-olds in a small town in Arizona, we are given a highly charged view of the meaning for these youngsters of the assassination of the President. The narration was made from children's explanations of their drawings. The event, the drawings and the voices conveying meanings merge to provide adults with excellent material related to children's needs under stress. *Follow the Leader*, dealing with pre-teenaged boys, is a very curious film and tends to trouble its audience. It poses the question of games moving from fantasy to reality. The way adults read meaning into children's play, fears and fantasy is revealed in the discussions that follow. This film again must be previewed before use (all films should be!), since it is quite sophisticated and requires a prepared audience.

Although the films selected above represent but a small portion of what is available, hopefully their range and flavor will provide texture to our view of the developing child because of their provocative content.

Filmography

Adventure Playground. Firebird Films. 7 min., b/w. $7 rental. New York: NYU Film Library, circa 1970.

Anything They Want To Be. Far West Labs. 7 min., color. $95, $12 rental. Berkeley: Univ. of Calif. Media Ext., 1968.

Child's Eyes, A: November 22, 1963. Richard Snodgrass. 9 min., color. $135, $12.50 rental. New York: Contemporary Films.

Conscience of a Child, The. NET/Bloomington. 29 min., b/w. $7.50 rental. Boston: Boston Univ. Film Library.

First Friends. Mental Health Film Board. 23 1/2 min., color. $285, $17.50 rental. Chicago: International Film Bureau, circa 1971.

Follow the Leader. 23 min., b/w. $135. New York: Carousel Films, 1970.

Growing Up in a Scary World. 15 min., color. $180, $13 rental. Berkeley: Univ. of Calif. Media Center, 1973.

How Babies Learn. U.S. Children's Bureau. 35 min., color. $250, $15 rental. New York: NYU Film Library, 1972.

I Is for Important. Far West Labs. 12 min., color. $160, $15 rental. Berkeley: Univ. of Calif. Media Ext., 1974.

Life Begins. 60 min., b/w. $12.50. New York: NYU Film Library, circa 1950.

Life with Baby. 18 min., b/w. $7 rental. New York: NYU Film Library, 1946.

One Potato, Two Potato. 24 min., b/w. $150, $12.50 rental. New York: Contemporary Films, circa 1970.

Outdoor Play: A Motivation for Learning. Queens College. 32 min., color. $200, $20 rental. New York: Campus Films, 1974.

Peers in Middle Childhood. Mental Health Film Board. 23 1/2 min., color. $285, $17.50 rental. Chicago: International Film Bureau, 1974.

Pizza, Pizza Daddy-O. EMC Films. 18 min., b/w. $145, $14 rental. Berkeley: Univ. of Calif. Media Ext., 1969.

Playground. 11 min., color. $130, $11 rental. Berkeley: Univ. of Calif. Media Ext., 1973.

Sugar and Spice. Odeon Films. 32 min., color. $225, $18 rental. New York: NYU Film Library, 1974.

World of Three, The. NFB of Canada. 28 min., b/w. $200, $11.50 rental. New York: NYU Film Library: McGraw/Hill, circa 1968.

Series:

Children Growing Up. BBC/TV. Nine films, 26 min. ea., color. $300 ea., $2300 for all; $30 ea. rental, $230 for all. New York: Time-Life Films, circa 1972.

Long Time To Grow, A. Vassar Films. Three films, 30-37 min. ea., b/w. $195-215 ea., $13 ea. rental. New York: NYU Film Library, 1951-59.

Springs of Learning, The. BBC/TV. Six films, 30 min. ea., b/w. $250 ea., $1200 for all; $50 ea. rental, $150 for all. New York: Time-Life Films, circa 1972.

READINESS AND THE NATURAL ABILITIES OF CHILDREN

AN AREA of continuing concern and anxiety for many who are teaching young children is that of how to contribute toward the building of readiness, strong foundational support for later learning. Basic to such support is the strengthening of children's sensori-motor abilities. The films reviewed this month reflect a small but useful collection that can provide both bread and cake for thought.

Educating Through Art

Herbert Read, a seminal thinker about art as a matrix for all educational experiences (see his *Education Through Art*), indicated that in an age such as ours, which permits the practice of brutalities despite our recommended ideals, we have a crucial task to preserve in children's upbringing the vividness of their sensations. In this way we might be able to relate actions to feelings and reality to ideals. Read would have us see idealism not as an escape mechanism but as a "simple human response to reality."

Two unusual films from Sweden, produced in cooperation with the Child Psychological Institute, help make possible an "ideal reality." *Children and Color* is particularly beautiful to view. Its skillful, esthetic photography shows us how an art teacher can relate with young children in an extraordinarily perceptive way. Working with a small group of six- to seven-year-olds, both indoors and outdoors, this teacher leads us to a view of nature and of materials that is filled with rich possibilities. It features striking physical layouts, unusual techniques for using a variety of materials (fingerpaints, for example, are handled in most exciting, practical ways), and opportunity to see children deeply immersed in joyful activities. I have found that, after reviewing this film, college students immediately want to see it again despite its length (22 minutes). A high-priority item for early childhood viewers.

Children and Form, a companion film with independent value, brings into sharp focus the sensitiveness that can be released in children through an exploration of familiar objects (rocks, clouds, trees, etc.). Excellent both for discussion purposes and for specific instruction in techniques, it features superior camera work which shows children working with clay, dough, sand and rocks to create new forms and patterns. The Swedish sound track affords some difficulty, but the distributor provides an English translation in script form, and with preparation the full value of the film can readily be experienced.

Another international contribution is the Japanese film, *Children Who Draw*. Photographed in a low-key manner, in black-and-white, it records the year's progress of a Tokyo first grade. The sensitive teacher, a male, narrates and affords listener-viewers an intimate sense of involvement with the needs of his large group of children. Through their art experiences, he reveals their individuality and promise. This film can be of value in both child development and curriculum courses. In my own classes, follow-up discussions of it have always revealed personal satisfactions of a very wide range.

A very short (6-minute) British film, *Beginning Picture Making*, can provide interesting possibilities when used with parent groups. Through its presentation of the art work of three- to seven-year-olds, we are enabled to see the range of maturation in both skills and ideas of children within this preschool-primary group. Films of this genre help parents understand the value of the visual arts as media of learning. A companion monograph, *Children and Their Pictures*, by C. D. Gaitskell, is available for $.75 from the distributor.

Movement: The Thread of Thought

Body movement and drama can make for profound learning experiences. From them children can learn more about themselves and their relationship to others; by observation and participation adults in turn can learn a great deal about children. Two films, *Introduction to Body Movement* and *In Touch*, give good foundational understandings of basic techniques of movement education. Although development

of this field has been painfully slow to develop in the United States, England and Canada have taken a vigorous lead, with Rudolph Laban as master guide. Fortunately, a fine exposition of Laban's methods and philosophy are available in the Canadian *Introduction* film, which may facilitate involvement of physical educators in primary school curriculum-planning. *In Touch* was designed to help in the preparation of student teachers from England's National Association of Mental Health's training program and bears the subtitle, *Movement for Mentally Handicapped Children*, but can well excite those interested in expanding and enriching the curriculum for *any* young children. It should prove useful for both student-teaching seminars and inservice training.

Looking for Me is a rare film that just might make a critical difference in how one values body movement. A fascinating account of the work of dancer-therapist Janet Adler, it moves through a variety of settings: nursery schools, a class of retardates, individual therapy with autistic children and a group of adults. Both for practical and theoretical purposes, teachers and other curriculum planners can draw from it valuable implications. One viewer, who came away with an idea used with retardates, tried it with a group of day care teachers to help them better understand children's occasional need not to be touched. She felt that no reading or lecture could have provided as much understanding as this exercise.

A shorter (13-minute), more modest film, *Movement Exploration: What Am I?*, also can give hesitant teachers confidence to move in new curricular directions. It captures lively children engaged in being birds, animals, machines, even people! The focus is on the eagerness and naturalness of children deeply involved in meaningful activity. Again, a good film to use with student teachers.

Drama is part and parcel of growth—yet too often one finds teachers who are not in the least familiar with the work of such leaders as Emily Gillies (*Creative Dramatics for All Children*) and Al Cullum (*Push Back the Desks*) or England's Dorothy Heathcote, Gabriel Barnfield and Brian Way. Fortunately, Dorothy Heathcote's exceptional work with middle-graders is now available through a series of films.

Three Looms Waiting is long (52 minutes) but moves with amazing speed. Although directed toward student teachers, this British film has, in my own experience, had a strong effect on "regular" teachers too. In provocative and stimulating fashion, it takes us to a range of settings: youngsters in a residential facility for delinquent boys, children in primary school, young adults at a youth center, student teachers and severely retarded youngsters working together at an institution.

The U.S.-made *Talks to Teachers*, I & II, shows us Ms. Heathcote in an American setting (Northwestern University School of Speech). Each film can be used singly. Part I deals with a teachers' workshop-exploration of the processes involved in improvised drama; it illustrates techniques well. Part II expands on techniques and on the interrelationship of drama with other curriculum areas, especially social studies and language arts. Viewers want to go to their classrooms and "do" immediately after seeing these films.

In *Building Beliefs*, I & II, Ms. Heathcote makes a fine contribution to the U.S. Bicentennial celebration. In both films she works directly with eight- and nine-year-old children to help them develop a working understanding that "A nation is as strong as the spirit of the people who made it." Through improvisations choreographed by her, social-studies concepts and language-arts learnings are beautifully shown as integral dimensions of such experiencing. While each film can stand alone, the two together afford opportunity for rich in-depth learning. One of the nicest things viewers indicate after seeing the Heathcote films is their satisfaction in having witnessed a great teacher in the teaching act.

Skills: Patterns in the Fabric

When do skills begin? Some people apparently believe that exact beginning points can be clearly identified and exploited. For many others, enough to sustain them is the understanding that no single time is "*the* moment" for acquiring skills. But because of the pressing need to convey this faith, knowledge and security to anxious school boards, community groups and parents, we sometimes forget how important readiness is as part of curriculum-design. *Foundations of Reading and Writing*, a thorough and well-grounded film made in cooperation with

members of the early childhood program at Queens College of the City University of New York, can help viewers reaffirm old values and posit new ones. In it we see children as they engage in purposive, pleasurable classroom activities that give footing for emerging language, reading and writing skills. Here is yet another multipurpose film that could be used well with early childhood education students and teachers, directors and staffs of day care and early childhood programs, and—perhaps more important—with parents. *Do* allow time for follow-up discussion.

A very different approach to readiness can be seen in *The Creative Kindergarten*. Here, in active, well-photographed sequences, we see planning, implementing and evaluating as the Mt. Diablo, California, United School District puts together a diagnostic, developmental program for kindergartners. A developmental scale can be obtained on request from the School District. The teacher in this film always receives enthusiastic raves from viewers.

Other notes: A most interesting sequence is the skipping scene. One shortcoming of the film is the soundtrack; some viewers find the guitar accompaniment overdone and distracting.

At one recent meeting where both of the last-mentioned films were used with early childhood educators, the follow-up discussion could have lasted through the night. Since both films are long and most of the viewers had come to see them after a day's work, such enthusiasm indicates the power of these films to affect audiences.

At a time when austerity is becoming a watchword in schools as well as in communities, and hard looks are being given to all curricula, I would hope that the possibilities proferred in these films will encourage us to look toward the children themselves as our greatest educational resources.

Filmography

BEGINNING PICTURE MAKING. 6 min., color. $6, $70. Chicago: International Film Bureau, Inc.

BUILDING BELIEFS, I & II. 28, 29 min. ea., color. $30 ea., $275 ea., or $50 both, $500 both. Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Film Library, 1975.

CHILDREN AND COLOR. 20 min., b/w. $35, $350. Scarsdale, NY: Campus Film Distributors, 1970.

CHILDREN AND FORM. 20 min., b/w. $25, $250. Scarsdale, NY: Campus Film Distributors, 1970.

CHILDREN WHO DRAW. 37 min., b/w. $12.50. Mt. Vernon, NY: Brandon Films, 1956.

CREATIVE KINDERGARTEN. 40 min., color. $35, $450. Concord, CA: Soundings, circa 1970.

DOROTHY HEATHCOTE TALKS TO TEACHERS, I & II. 30, 32 min. ea., color. $25 ea., $250 ea., or $45 both, $450 both. Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Film Library, 1974.

FOUNDATIONS OF READING AND WRITING. 40 min., color. $30, $325. Scarsdale, NY: Queens College, Campus Film Distributors, 1975.

IN TOUCH. 25 min., b/w. $15, $160. New York: Concord Films, N.Y.U. Film Library, 1969.

INTRODUCTION TO MOVEMENT EDUCATION. 36 min., color. $20. New York: UEVA, N.Y.U. Film Library, circa 1971.

LOOKING FOR ME. b/w. $15, $125. New York: N.Y.U. Film Library, 1969.

MOVEMENT EXPLORATION: WHAT AM I? 13 min., color. $6. Boston: Boston University Film Library, circa 1971.

THREE LOOMS WAITING. BBC/TV. 52 min., color. $50, $500. New York: Time-Life Films, 1974.

4.

SCHOOLS AS MIRRORS

As a society Americans have been much involved in searching for selfhood. Some years ago psychiatrist Harry Stack Sullivan set forth the idea that "the self is made up of reflected images." Similarly, sociologist Charles Cooley presented the concept of "the looking glass self." On the premise that our society's search can be made visible through images afforded by its institutions—and especially by its schools—we have chosen for the theme of this first film-review column of the 1976-77 year "Schools as Mirrors."

Two aspects of the search will especially be observed: the *individual vision* that has long been part of the American tradition of democratic freedom of choice and the *community actions* that reflect larger group needs in an organized manner.

Reflections of Regional Culture

Devoted fans of *Passion for Life* (reviewed Nov./Dec. 1975), that marvelous French film which encapsulates much that should be said about schools' interrelationships with society, will find of especial interest *The Kingdom Come School.* This film, centered on one of the fast disappearing one-room schoolhouses in America, brings vividly to life the work of Harding Ison, teacher, grades 1-8. We see a busily functioning "open classroom" of twenty-two interaged children, each with special needs, his or her own. The teacher draws on the richness of culture of the beautiful Appalachian hillsides and guides the children to active relation with their heritage. Poignantly set forth are the dilemmas posed as the community must decide whether to consolidate with other schools or to maintain its independence and integrity as a one-room school. Showing this film practically guarantees enthusiastic discussion; educational planners and curriculum specialists, as well as classroom teachers, will be challenged by it.

A slightly older film, *A Dream To Learn,* which was made in the Roxbury district of Boston during the summer of 1966, gives a comprehensive look at a cultural enrichment program for blacks. Although some may feel the film is dated, its camera work is still entrancing and still of great importance are the points made through the images of children's expressions as they reflect interest and even surprise in discovering their ethnic heritage through school work. For communities struggling with decisions related to ethnic studies, this film can provide valuable stimulus and focus.

In both of these films the regional speech of teachers and children provides viewers (and listeners!) from other parts of the country with a feeling for the differences in so vast a society.

More Communities in Action

Several schools made possible through a combination of individual vision and collective action can be viewed in the following films:

Chance for Change, a true gem, shows the Mississippi Headstart Program in action. Clearly apparent are the joy and satisfaction of parents, community members, professional workers and children actively involved in building a sound educational program. As we see a vision move into reality, we are filled with hope. Particularly affected are teachers-in-training, community activists and parents. Indeed, it would be useful to show voters and legislators such a film annually! Polly Greenberg's book, *The Devil Has Slippery Shoes,* is a very detailed volume documenting this project.

An older school started by a community group in Yorktown Heights, Westchester, NY, in the early 1960s can be seen in *A Community Nursery School.* This film provides us with a fine case history of the birth and growth of a cooperative nursery, which was started by a small group of parents and community members interested in the problems of the area: a rapid growth of population, new lower income home-owners, older home-owners with very young children separated from neighbors and peers, and many young parents. In light of the increased interest of groups forming such schools, this film can be most useful in setting forth basic early childhood principles and practices within the framework of an emerging

and/or expanding community. Caution: The film is long (40 minutes); time should be allowed for discussion.

A good companion-film is *New Lease on Learning*. It moves swiftly and colorfully, showing in a case-history approach the conversion of commercial space on a busy street (a synagogue and a supermarket site) to an active preschool center. This school came to be through the combined efforts of members of the community working with a Ford Foundation grant and the local community school board. The children (ages 3-6) are seen in active situations that reflect the usefulness and appropriateness of the modern design. Parents and staff are shown engaging in planning and preparing the facility. Of particular interest is one discussion of possible relationships between local school boards and community needs for preschools. If you are looking for a film to help stimulate such interplay in your community, this one can be most helpful. It is also a good film to use to understand better the role parents can and should play in the educational life of schools.

Personal vision often looms large as a reason for a school's being. In *Caring More Than a Day*, apparent is the steadfastness of Dorothy Pitman Hughes. She is an urban black woman who is concerned about special needs not being met by the established public day care centers. How she goes about meeting such needs is important and will stimulate considerable discussion. I have found revealing differences in the way that student-teachers and teachers respond to this film as compared with the responses of parents and community members-at-large.

An even stronger film, *The Children's School*, presents the difficulties faced by a group of New Haven, Connecticut, parents when they decide that the local schools do not reflect their needs. They set up an alternative school that typifies many of the programs in schools that seek in their curricula to implement political concerns of parents. A parent faction represents members of the Black Panthers. The provocative film forces audiences to come to terms with a great many of the words we use loosely relative to the controversial place of politics in the curriculum.

Reflecting the search for selfhood, alternative schools take on many forms in our society. The World of Inquiry School in Rochester, New York, can be viewed in *Choosing To Learn*. Although of mediocre quality cinematically, this film does add to the picture of community responses to changing educational needs. The school program is an interesting one and the children, teachers and parents observed reflect a wide racial and economic cross-section. Since this school was funded under Title III, it may provide school administrators and community members with useful direction. For those interested in program development, it will also offer needed views.

Personal Images

One of the oldest figures in the move toward alternative forms of education is A. S. Neil. A very rewarding film, *Summerhill*, shows Neil in conversational format discussing his philosophy. We also can see children actively engaged in a Summerhill setting in Canada. Providing a rare opportunity to see the founder of the institutional idea reflected through a school and the children in it, this film has proved particularly effective in courses about current theories of education. Discussion can be greatly enhanced by previous reading of Neil's writings, such as *Freedom Not License*. This challenging film frequently surprises viewers into rethinking their conception of freedom.

By way of contrast, a more mechanized approach to individual learning and personal freedom in a California setting can be seen in *Every Kid a Learner*. I suppose I am carping, but I dislike immensely the use of *"Kid"* in the title. In some ways it has shaped my feelings about the basic premise of this film. Those of you familiar with the work of Helen Parkhurst and the Dalton Plan will see vestigial threads as children and staff engage in contract learning. To others, the ideas may seem fresher in the intriguing physical setting provided. The programing of the day is unusual. This film usually stirs up a great deal of animated discussion.

How do children and teachers mirror what goes on in schools? *What Is Teaching? What Is Learning?*, a modest film (just 20 minutes long), provides feedback from children and teachers engaged in open classroom settings. The contrast between the more traditional forms of teaching-learning engaged in and the newer practices gives the audience opportunity to voice their own opinions as response to such change. This film is unlike others on open education in that it relies more heavily on personal views of teachers than

on observed classroom activity. If schools are mirrors, then the teachers surely are reflections that should bear witness.

New I.D.E.A.s

I.D.E.A., in Melbourne, Florida, has been steadily attempting to keep educational ideas moving forward into the public domain. Two films add in very different ways to the picture of schools as mirrors.

Charlie and the Golden Hamster is a short, very clear film. In the space of 13 minutes the underlying basis of the nongraded elementary school is explained and illustrated with interesting scenes related to readying schools for children, as contrasted with the idea that children must be ready for school. Viewers tend to feel far more comfortable in being a little more critical about premature labeling of children after seeing this encouraging film. Frankly, for that reason alone I would show it to both student teachers and teachers.

The other film from I.D.E.A. that deserves an audience is *School Boards in Crisis*. Its 26 minutes seem a bit long, but are also very useful in depicting pressures and conflicts experienced by members of school boards as they attempt to deal with a host of current problems: desegregation, new teaching methods, teacher militancy and rising budgets. Frequently we tend to shield teachers-to-be and teachers themselves from such realities. I feel that such a film has a place in courses on supervision, problems of education and human relations within schools, since it moves beyond classroom and school doorways to broader arenas of social concerns.

Four on Montessori

Always interesting are the variations on a theme that individuals are capable of effecting. In viewing a group of films on Montessori education, I was struck by the variety of approaches.

One of the newest films, *Montessori: A Way To Grow*, provides an overall picture of philosophy, training and implementation within several settings. Made by the Montessori Institute of Atlanta, it was filmed in several schools and affords a clear overview of both theory and practice. I was particularly struck by the scenes of children gardening in a New Orleans school; they reminded me so much of situations called forth in the work of Froebel and Luther Burbank. The friendly dog in one of the classrooms gives viewers an immediate talking point! I would strongly advise the showing of this film for those interested in a well-documented view of current possibilities and practices related to the Montessori movement.

Margaret Skutch, parent-become-educator, shows in *Room To Learn* a cinematic record of the building and setting up of an open classroom Montessori preschool. A record of the development of Ms. Skutch as an educator can also be found in her popular book, *To Build a School*. However, on a recent visit to the school I realized that the film exercised far more power for me than did the written account. Students looking ahead find a great deal of hope in this film. Perhaps Ms. Skutch will make another film of the program offered in the school. It was very interesting to see the development in the program and the setting from the time the film was made to that of my visit (winter '75).

In *The Joy of Learning* we view children actively engaged in the preschool Montessori program at St. Alban's school in Washington, DC. College students find this film particularly important as it helps confirm the truth (often missing in their personal experiences) that children with handicaps can be successfully included in regular settings. The blind child in this film is of particular interest. The film is a bit more didactic than *Montessori: A Way To Grow* but offers additional insight into program possibilities. Another film from Washington, DC, *Montessori: Approach to Early Learning*, made by the Washington Society for Crippled Children, also focuses on the possibilities to be found within such a program for both normal and handicapped children. The camera work is particularly good.

In all four of these films the attitudes of the adults always provide foci for prolonged discussion, which can help students begin to understand that the Montessori approach is not simply a method.

Schools for All

With so many different needs, so many practices, so many of us thinking of ways schools can mirror the best in our society, it has been very difficult to select the films for review this month.

I would like to end with *Special Children, Special Needs*, indeed a "special" film, which records the work conducted by Ronnie Gordon and her dedicated staff at the New York University-Bellevue Pre-School Center and in

turn reflects what a great deal human beings are capable of when faced with special problems. The children in this film are all severely handicapped: blind, maimed, handless, immobile, etc. Work with parents and children can be observed both indoors and outdoors. Particularly powerful is a scene showing a handicapped teacher working with a disabled child. The film has been made with great care and should be seen by all involved in educational planning. Every legislator should see this film too, as it brings the needs of innocent victims of life and their parents into the mainstream of those who deserve the benefits of schools. It vividly reminds us that schools are for all.

Mirrors are a means. We stand before them, an image is reflected, thoughts ensue, questions emerge. Looking at schools should provide us not with easy answers but rather with really significant questions so that our search is worth continuing.

Filmography

CARING MORE THAN A DAY. Richard Oretsky. 20 min., color. New York: BFC, circa 1970.

CHANCE FOR CHANGE. OEO. 39 min., b/w. Free. New York: MTP, 1212 6th Ave., circa 1969.

CHARLIE AND THE GOLDEN HAMSTER. I D E A. 13 min., color. $8.50 rental, $140. New York: NYU Film Library, 1974.

CHILDREN'S SCHOOL, THE. Deborah D. Macagno. 20 min., b/w. 1969.

CHOOSING TO LEARN. Henry Felt. 26 min., color. Cambridge, MA: EDC, 1969.

COMMUNITY NURSERY SCHOOL, A. Westchester Citizens Committee. 40 min., b/w. $12.50 rental, $210. New York: NYU Film Library, circa 1968.

DREAM TO LEARN, A. 28 min., b/w. $168. New York: Center for Mass Communications, 1966.

EVERY KID A LEARNER. 21 min., color. $45 rental, $330. San Francisco: HAF Alternates on Film, 1974.

JOY OF LEARNING, T[illegible] Columbia Forum, Columbia, MD. 25 min., color. $1[illegible] rental. New York: NYU Film Library, 1970.

Kingdom Come School, The. 20 min., color. $25 rental, $250. Whitesburg, KY: Appalshop, Inc., 1973.

MONTESSORI: A WAY TO GROW. 32 min., color. $38 rental, $385. Auburn, AL: Promethean Films South, 1975.

MONTESSORI APPROACH TO EARLY LEARNING. 20 min., color. $10 rental. Washington, DC: Society for Crippled Children, 1970.

NEW LEASE ON LEARNING. Educational Facilities Laboratories. 22 min., color. $17.50 rental. New York: NYU Film Library, 1973.

ROOM TO LEARN. 22 min., color. $17.50 rental, $125. Cambridge, MA: EDC, 1970.

SCHOOL BOARDS IN CRISIS. I D E A. 26 min., color. $15 rental. New York: NYU Film Library, 1975.

SPECIAL CHILDREN, SPECIAL NEEDS. 28 min., color. $25 rental. Scarsdale, NY: Steve Campus Films, 1974.

SUMMERHILL. 27 min., color. $17 rental, $325. National Film Board of Canada/McGraw Hill, 1967.

WHAT IS TEACHING? WHAT IS LEARNING? Tony Gorsline. 20 min., b/w. Washington, DC: NIMH, 1971.

5.

FAMILIES: WEAVERS OF CIVILIZATION

"Parents are people," as a popular song notes—people with a special mission. Twenty-five years ago we might have viewed this mission as having a linear path, but change has been so rapid that the path now appears more like a cloverleaf highway, filled with options, twists, turns and an ever-increasing number of billboards telling what one should or should not do. This month the films reviewed were selected to help provide verification that we are all more truly human even as parents than we might imagine. It is within the family that our humanness is learned.

Birth: Parents Emerge

A popular theme in filmmaking lately is that of childbirth. Several films offer educators an opportunity to see this unique event from quite differing viewpoints. *Birth Without Violence* shows, within a brief period, the delivery of a child by Dr. Lebover. Lebover has refined a technique used in some areas of west Africa for a nontraumatic delivery—utilizing lowered lighting, softening the sounds about the mother, and providing water as an early environment. Importantly, some more prevalent birth practices may be challenged and modified on the basis of questions generated by this approach.

Not Me Alone is a long film (31 minutes) chronicling a couple's preparation for childbirth, based on Lamaze prenatal training and delivery procedures. This film can be especially helpful in work with teenagers and their parents, and with students in child development. A shortened version, *Childbirth*, is also available.

A Baby Is Born, a general informational film geared to younger parents-to-be, provides scenes from labor and delivery but does not have the emotional impact of the other films cited. Each of these films includes the father as an active participant in the birth process.

Parents, Their Influence: Influencing Parents

A fine series of six films, *Mother-Infant Interaction*, shows aspects of the research of Sylvia Brody and Sidney Axelrad. The films are long (40 to 49 minutes each) but audiences are usually very attentive to the interplay as mothers feed their children—at six weeks, six months, one year. The films restate Gesell developmental tasks and make visible relationships between feeding patterns and approaches to experiences. I would caution that these films be used with careful supervision. Use with parent groups is suggested when prescreening and planned discussion are possible.

Maternal Deprivation in Young Children, a rather strong film that reports on current research in France, is warmly recommended for those of you interested in conveying a sense of urgency about early childhood needs in a society. It shows early disorders, presents intervention processes, and provokes thought toward a reemergence of the therapeutic nursery as a needed form of day care.

A new three-film series from the National Film Board of Canada, *The First Two Years of Life*, provides intimate looks at the daily life of six infants in their homes and with their families. This "au naturelle" viewing has its shortcomings in that we see a great deal on the screen and may as a result give attention to personalized aspects of members of the family rather than to generalizations related to growth and development that are imbedded in the content. Discussion time for any one of these films should be provided for, since a great deal will inevitably be revealed of viewer attitudes toward many facets of child care.

A lengthy (60 minutes) TV program prepared in the late '60s, *The Parents*, affords a kaleidoscopic view of problems confronting parents and children of all ages. Particularly interesting are the interviews with Betty Friedan and Dr. Spock. Viewed in the light of shifts of the '60s and '70s, it generates many new questions.

Learning in Joy vividly supplies information on the home program initiated by Phyllis Levenstein as part of a verbal interaction project. Trained "visitors" go into homes and work with

toddlers and mothers as "toy demonstrators." Training and follow-up sessions are shown. The film can be most useful to those school systems and communities interested in reaching out into homes to work with younger or less experienced parents. Another such film is *Mothers and Toddlers*—although in this case we see how mothers of young children are provided for in a less pressured manner. Within a high-rise project in Chicago, room was set aside for young mothers to meet informally with their children for social interchange. The low-key nature of this approach may well stimulate lively discussion related to approaches toward influencing the kind of care given the young.

One area of negative influence is child abuse. *Child Beater*, a short, strong film, provides much for both discussion and reflection. A child is brought to the hospital, victim of a mother's beating. Through flashbacks, events in the mother's life that culminated in the beating are shown. *Children in Peril*, which is a bit longer (22 minutes), was made as a TV program for a wide audience. Highly informative, it offers statistics, cases, methodologies used to protect children, abuse-prevention techniques and rehabilitation projects for parents. Most illuminating are interviews with parents in group sessions. Viewers will experience a sense of compassion and distress for the abuser as well as the child. These important films well merit inclusion in teacher-training programs.

Alternate Forms of Parenthood

The Family: Life Styles of the Future looks sympathetically at the rapid changes in traditional family structure. Margaret Mead comments on these trends (multiple marriages, communal living arrangements, and the erosion of the nuclear family as model). The effects of these adult shifts are being experienced in profound ways by the young. How teachers and schools deal with the children involves consideration of both personal views and professional practices. This film should be seen by all educators.

Free Growth reflects attitudes and behaviors in schools and homes through personal histories. Although not a comfortable film for many audiences, since it raises questions related to discipline, freedom, and choice in alternate life spaces, it too is an important one for teachers and family workers to see.

Living Together will spark an audience. Filmed in black-and-white, it has a very real quality. A final commentary, again by Margaret Mead, softens its impact a bit. Shown are three families who have moved into new, alternate life styles. Two of these families have younger children in them. The sight of a group of women living together without men can send some audiences into shock. The discussions that follow can be most meaningful, since attitudes toward the children involved are exposed as transferences of attitudes toward the adult/parent.

Special Family Needs

Some families are faced with extraordinary needs when a child has a handicap. Several films bring such problems into very sharp focus.

When retardation occurs, it poses serious threats and places sizable burdens on individuals and family. *Becky*, a film about a child retarded from birth, poignantly reveals how members of her family dealt with her and learned ways of integrating her differences into the fabric of family life. *Sarah Has Down's Syndrome*, a film less involved with the initial reaction of the family to the new member, deals with the home life of a mongoloid child at seven. As members of her family work with her and speak of their own feelings, an understanding of the capacity of individuals to reach out to other humans emerges. Both of these films are well worth the viewing. Audiences of adolescents and teachers often find that they have been less aware than they might have been of how individual members are affected and respond in such families.

James and John is a most unusual film. It shows ten-year-old mentally handicapped twins during a typical day, quickly establishing viewer empathy with the family, whose role is crucial to the children's well being. *What Color Is the Wind?* is about three-year-old twins, one of whom is blind. The parents of these similar but different children create a family that meets many needs. Both of these films help to heighten consciousness of all viewers.

Each film in this category should be shown on public TV and at local community meetings to help members of the community broaden their attitudes and engage in action programs. How one community does meet such special needs through engagement of older citizens as

grandparents to mentally retarded youngsters in an institution is shown beautifully in *Green Valley Grandparents*. In this Tennessee town we see a strengthening of bonds between generations.

Cultural Aspects of Families

Quite some time ago, *Bathing Babies in Three Cultures* caused quite a stir. This very short film (9 minutes) still generates lengthy discussion. Part of a series on character formation in different cultures, it makes possible an intimate glimpse into beliefs and practices basic to all life. Once again Margaret Mead discusses the scenes.

Roots of Happiness is a documentary about a sugar worker and his family in Puerto Rico. The intimacy of their relations and the particular needs of adults and children are seen as inextricably bound together in that peculiar structure called "family."

Children of Change presents families in which the mothers work outside the home. They are viewed as a cultural phenomenon requiring special attention. Teachers and school staffs are good audiences for this film.

In quite another direction, a series of films made through the Arsenal Family and Children's Center of the University of Pittsburgh provides needed light on the role of cultural continuity in the lives of children. *Appalachian Children* is set in a rural coal-mining town of West Virginia. The effect of the physical environment on members of the community is poignantly revealed as the children play and interact with adults. *Southern Black Children*, set in Houston, Texas, brings into view the oral tradition so rich in black history and life. Older members of the community interact with younger ones: circle games, stories, music, mannerisms, expectations reflecting a cultural past are shared. *Mexican American Children*, set in the Rio Grande Valley, places the cultural aspects of role models into a very clear light.

Recently, Barbara Bowman of the Erikson Institute, in an important address before the First National Conference on Non-Sexist Early Education, spoke of the necessity of examining cultural dimensions of roles before modifications are pressed educationally. These films reinforce her suggestion and should give us pause for reflection and impetus for continued research.

The last film in the series, *Montana Mountain Children*, set in Missoula, Montana, at the Flathead Indian Reservation, provides a plea for recognition of the cultural heritage of the several Indian tribes and indicates how action is being taken through the Head Start program. Children engage in games and activities; questions are raised related to the values of the viewed and the viewer that are most important to clarify. Discussion is needed to add to this clarification. These films are important to those involved in development of programs and program-planning in individual schools, to parent educators, and to teacher trainers.

While the problems of alienated but native groups loom large, the problem of immigrants is also a real one. A Canadian film, *Italians in Transition*, focuses on the particular needs of the Italian immigrant to Canada (a large group in the '50s and '60s). Through interviews with parents, students and teachers in Canada and in Italy, the impact of moving from one culture to another is revealed in a most useful and visually arresting manner. Realization of the tremendous desire of adult immigrants to sacrifice large parts of their past to provide for a better life for their children is clearly set forth, and viewers are compelled to consider such motivation in their attitudes to both children and families.

Families are the culture bearers in a society. What they have to offer society and how society integrates such offerings help define "civilization."

Filmography

BABY IS BORN, A. 23 min., color. $30 rental, $300. Northfield, IL: Perennial, 1974.

BATHING BABIES IN THREE CULTURES. 9 min., b/w. $7 rental, $60. New York: NYU Film Library, 1954.

BECKY. 15 min., color. $15 rental, $150. Falls Church, VA: Stuart Finley, 1974.

BIRTH WITHOUT VIOLENCE. 21 min., sepia. $40 rental, $250. New York: New Yorker Films, 1974.

CHILD BEATER. 15 min., color. Chicago: Children's Memorial Hospital, 1969.

CHILDBIRTH. 17 min. color. $20 rental, $225. Boston: Polymorph, 1970s.

CHILDREN IN PERIL. 22 min., color. $30 rental, $300. New York: ABC Media, 1972.

FAMILY, THE: LIFE STYLES IN THE FUTURE. 22 min., color. $40 rental, $300. New York: Document Associates, 1971.

FREE GROWTH. 36 min., b/w. $14 rental, $215. Berkeley: University of California Media Ext., 1971.

GREEN VALLEY GRANDPARENTS. 10 min., b/w. $15 rental, $125. Memphis, TN: Center for Southern Folklore, 1972.

ITALIANS IN TRANSITION. 26 min., color. $15 rental, $200. Ontario, Can.: Ontario Institue for Studies in Education, 1974.

JAMES AND JOHN. 23 min., color. $28 rental, $265. Warren, MI: Peach Enterprises, 1973.

LEARNING IN JOY. 22 min., color. $25 rental, $300. New York: Synchro Films, 1973.

LIVING TOGETHER. 28 min., b/w. East Seattle, WA: Skip & Go Naked Productions, 1971.

MATERNAL DEPRIVATION IN YOUNG CHILDREN. 30 min., b/w. $10 rental, $135. New York: NYU Film Library, circa 1971.

MOTHERS AND TODDLERS. 18 min., b/w. $40 rental, $250. New York: NYU Film Library, circa 1972.

NOT ME ALONE. 31 min., color. $35 rental, $350. Boston: Polymorph, circa 1971.

PARENTS, THE. 60 min., b/w. $9. Bloomington, IN: NET, circa 1967.

ROOTS OF HAPPINESS. 25 min., b/w. $12.50 rental, $175. Chicago: International Film Bureau, circa 1968.

SARAH HAS DOWN'S SYNDROME. 17 min., color. $20 rental, $175. Cambridge, MA: EDC, 1974.

WHAT COLOR IS THE WIND? 27 min., color. $30 rental, $375. Los Angeles: Allan Grant Productions, 1973.

Series:

MOTHER-INFANT INTERACTION. Six films, 40-45 min. ea., b/w. $12 ea. rental, $200 ea. New York: NYU Film Library, n.d.

PLAY AND CULTURAL CONTINUITY. Arsenal Family and Children's Center. Four films, 27 min. ea., color. $25 ea. rental, $250 ea. or $900 for series. Scarsdale, NY: Campus Films, 1975.

THE FIRST TWO YEARS OF LIFE. Three films, 29 min. ea., color. $20 ea. rental, $425 ea. New York: CRM-McGraw-Hill, 1975.

CHILDREN: THE LEGACY

QUITE A FEW YEARS AGO I had the good fortune of meeting with Dr. Margaret Mead to seek advice and support for my doctoral research. In a dark, intimate garret atop the American Museum of Natural History, I was greeted by a sparkling person who seemed uniquely aware of the children of the world. May this column serve as a modest tribute to her care and concern for the young.

Children as Victims of History

What Right Has a Child?, a 1969 UN-produced film, brings to our immediate attention the plight of children in an adult-oriented world. By use of children's drawings, this film expresses vividly the rights promulgated through the UN Declaration of Rights of the Child. Despite the passage of eighteen years, much remains to be done to guarantee such rights.

The following two films face major world disasters that have had profound effects on children. *I Never Saw Another Butterfly*, a Czech-made film based on the book of the same title, reveals through art work, poetry and stories the hopes and fears of children confined to the Terezin concentration camp during World War II. The destiny of most of these children was to be an early death. In *1000 Cranes: The Children of Hiroshima*, the victimization of children by war is further documented. How some of these children survived is a tribute to the human spirit. Both of these films should be shown to older children and adults; the impact may be surprising. Discussion about such brutality directed toward children is rarely evidenced in national decision-making.

Throughout Asia, problems of children abandoned in the wake of war and displacement demand our attention. *Diary of a Yungkogi Boy* reveals the plight of one ten-year-old Korean child lost in a world not of his making, cut off from caring adults. Who is responsible for such children? We must raise the question within the educational community as well as among nations.

Changing life styles also account for feelings of fear and distress that are affecting ever greater numbers of the world's children. *The Family in the Purple House* gives us a glimpse of what it is like to be a child in a fatherless family amidst a community where fathers are part of the home. A series from Canada, *Working Mothers*, contains ten separate films dealing with problems

that arise in families when mothers work outside the home. Such films bring to the fore important areas for discussion for parents, teachers and school administrators.

A New Kid on the Block highlights the growing problem of mobility; in it the difficulties of moving are revealed through the eyes of a child. Adult decision-making often leads to changed social values and patterns of living. Yet, too often we as educators and parents seek only to deal with effects *after* the fact. It would be useful through viewing some of these films to reconsider adult decision-making in terms of the best interests of the child rather than the immediate needs of adults. Could the legacy of the A and H bombs and the concentration camps then be seen as honorable? Were the children of the world considered in such decision-making?

Meeting Special Needs in Special Ways

Two films from Children's Hospital Center in Washington, DC, can help in facing the hospitalization of a child. *To Prepare a Child*, directed toward adults, shows three cases: an emergency seizure, a heart patient and a surgery case. *A Hospital Visit with Clipper*, directed toward parent and child, introduces the hospital situation by means of a lively puppet-presentation. Since over 3,000,000 children are hospitalized annually in the USA, public-service TV would be providing direct help to many by showing this type of film.

On a more individualized level, *My Son Kevin* can provide for important discussion in parenting classes. It deals with 400 English children who were victims of their mothers' use of Thalidomide. Through the story of one family, we see the dreadful physical and psychological damage perpetrated on the unborn by use of this drug. Provided for our consideration is serious material related to drug abuse education.

England has consistently pointed the way in innovative practices. Two films tell about the Camphill Movement, which was started by Dr. Carl Konig, an Austrian refugee influenced by the work of Rudolf Steiner. *Camphill School* describes how handicapped people and emotionally disturbed children live together in Aberdeen, Scotland, fostering and supporting mutual growth and development. *Bottom Village* shows us a community in Yorkshire where 100 mentally handicapped adults work productively with other village adults and children, farming and making toys and equipment. Through the content of these films, we come to feel strongly how children and adults can share purposes in reaching human goals of reciprocity.

The "exceptional child" is still a minority member of the world of children. *The Child Experts* brings to view the thoughts and findings of five British experts who, through discussion and example, point to effects of environment and class on the development of intelligence. *The Exceptional Child*, a rather long (51 min.) film, impressively reviews international research on both the gifted and not-so-gifted. As we see children in South Africa and Scotland as well as in England, the findings of research become immediately important. *The Gifted Child* shows art, music and math activities in provocative and fascinating dimensions that should inspire parents, teachers and school administrators to rethink ways of identifying and serving this needy group of children.

The New Road, a modest film, deals with efforts made since the 1960s in meeting the educational needs of migrant children. *Stay on, Stranger* shows that one person can bring about significant change; in it we see Alice Geddes Lord, a teacher in Appalachia, who launches her pupils into an exciting world of learning and simultaneously exacts a sense of responsibility from them to return to their own communities and teach so that others can follow their lead and the future can be guaranteed. An unusual lady, an unusual film, verifying that adults *can* be responsible to children.

Educating the Children of the World

In previous columns, I have reported on films about children in educational settings in England (November/December '75, February '76, April '76), France (November/December '75), Canada (February '76, October '76, January '77), Denmark (February '76), Sweden and Japan (April '76).

Four films from Australia provide lively additions to our growing awareness of comparative practices. *Through My Eyes: Kilkenny* and *Through My Eyes: Stradbrook* clarify differences between English, American and Australian approaches to the open plan form of school organization. *I'm Ready To Learn*

helps parents better understand goals of nursery and kindergarten schools, and *I'm Going to School Today* does the same at the primary school level. Though both of these films were made for public information purposes with Australian parents in mind, they are useful for others too and can provide for rich discussion in curriculum classes and program planning.

Matakana Island Family Preschool brings a bit of New Zealand, enabling us to see Maori mothers and grandmothers endeavoring to set up a grassroots preschool program centered about the family. Contrasted with *Chance for Change* (October '76), it makes a fine double-bill for a class involved in community-sponsored early child care.

Ao Lemoren, set in the Marshall Islands, carefully portrays the development of a Head Start program focused on the natural environment. *Village School* shows young children in a lower primary school in Kenya, two oceans away. The curriculum seems quite European, yet the materials of instruction again reflect local assets.

Education in the USSR reviews all levels of Soviet education over a forty-year period, describing various settings. One particularly fascinating sequence predicts the future educational prospects of a child born in 1959. Though dated, this film is well worth viewing. More up-to-date, *The Soviet Union: A Student's Life* brings to the screen a chemical engineer (maybe he was a student of '59!) who reviews his own student life from nursery school through the University of Moscow. This very interesting film can be compared with the earlier one in several ways and can also provide for lively discussion of goals set by different nations.

Trying to find a film that reflects on Chinese education proved a bit more difficult; however, *China: Education for a New Society* meets the need. Here we see children in educational programs from kindergarten through university levels. This view of a nation setting its educational goals in a linear way can again make for useful comparisons with, for example, the Soviet system and that of the U.S.A. To get the most of such comparative discussions, previewing of the films is obviously required.

In a number of films on the Israeli kibbutzim we can see yet another type of social planning through education. *Kibbutz Care and Family Care: Part I: Two Climates of Childhood in Israel* depicts 3-½-year-olds moving through a day in home settings in town and in kibbutz settings. *Part II: Patterns of Parenting* shows the same-aged children, in direct relations with adults. Selma Fraiberg discusses the films on screen with her class at the University of Michigan. *Rearing Kibbutz Babies* provides additional material on the kibbutz system for infant care, with a view of a babies' house in which the caring one for the group is also a mother of some of the children. A companion film, *Infant Development in the Kibbutz*, examines different kinds of care offered through group and shared parental activities, showing babies up to 21 months in a wide range of activities. *Day Care for a Kibbutz Toddler* is my favorite choice. This film, made by Jeannette Stone and the late L. Joseph Stone, brings forth in a most cohesive manner the daily life of caregivers and children. I have found that audiences respond well to the scenes of socialization between children, leave-taking of parents, and storytelling and are often stimulated to follow-up dicusssions related to program-planning and curriculum. *Kibbutz*, a different kind of film, reveals attitudes and feelings about kibbutz life, including education, of two generations. Since it presents some very thought-provoking views on such upbringing, it is an interesting film to show in relation to any of the others. *Children of Bet Alpha* provides the broadest picture of the effect of communal life on growing children. In it we view collective education as "education *in* life," rather than for life. Questions of national goals and individual goals emerge throughout all of the films in this category.

Margaret Mead—Participant-Observer

In my January 1977 column I reviewed several films of Margaret Mead, *Family: Life Styles in the Future* and *Bathing Babies in Three Cultures. Four Families, Part I* shows the differing family-life and child-care practices of farmers in France and in India. The relationship is fascinating. *Part II* provides a comparison between Japanese and Canadian families, as we see mothers engage in dressing, feeding and bathing activities with babies and children. Particularly clear in each of these films is the reciprocity of adult-child actions, which stirs the audience toward questioning some current practices in both urban and suburban settings of

adults. Most commonly heard is the thrust-toward-adulthood push that parents in America appear to make in contrast with the movement of time in other countries.

In *Anatomy of Youth,* generational differences incurred by the rapid movement after World War II are brought into sharp focus. The role of parents vis-a-vis growing children is shown in a range of topics discussed by Dr. Mead. Though dated qualities may be found in some of her films, one constant appears to hold throughout: the responsibility of the adult to the growing child is one that must be accepted by the adult; otherwise chaos and discontinuity of those qualities all of us value as human can be irretrievably lost. Margaret Mead reminds us of the verity of a proverb that can be found in various cultures, "Under the Sky We Are All One."

Filmography

ANATOMY OF YOUTH. 21 min., color. $25 rental, $300 purchase. New York: ABC Media Concepts, 1970.

AO LEMOREN. 27 min., color. $25, $325. New York: NYU Film Library, 1971.

BOTTON VILLAGE. 35 min., color. $45, $500. New York: Time-Life Films, 1970.

CAMPHILL SCHOOL. 35 min., color. $45, $500. New York: Time-Life Films, 1970.

CHILD EXPERTS, THE. 40 min., b/w. $40, $350. New York: Time-Life Films, 1970.

CHILDREN OF BET ALPHA. 27 min., color. $35, $350. New York: Phoenix Films, 1974.

CHINA: EDUCATION FOR A NEW SOCIETY. 15 min., color. $185. Chicago: Britannica Films.

DAY CARE FOR A KIBBUTZ TODDLER. 27 min., color. $25. New York: New York University Films, 1973.

DIARY OF A YUNGKOGI BOY. 24 min., b/w. $225. New York: New Yorker Films, 1973.

EDUCATION IN THE USSR. 21 min., b/w. $6. New York: Branden Films.

EXCEPTIONAL CHILD, THE. 51 min., b/w. $40, $300. New York: Time-Life Films, 1971.

FAMILY IN THE PURPLE HOUSE, THE. 13 min., color. King Screen Productions, 1970.

FOUR FAMILIES—PART I. 29 min., b/w. $25. PART II. 31 min., b/w. $25. New York: NFBC/McGraw Hill, 1960.

GIFTED CHILD, THE. 35 min., color. $35, $350. New York: Time-Life Films, circa 1973.

HOSPITAL VISIT WITH CLIPPER, A. 15 min., color. $25, $155. Washington, DC: Children's Hospital, NMC, 1975.

I NEVER SAW ANOTHER BUTTERFLY. 15 min., color. $12.50, $200. New York: Macmillan, circa 1973.

I'M GOING TO SCHOOL TODAY. 27 min., color. On request from Australian Information Service, New York, circa 1972.

I'M READY TO LEARN. 29 min., color. On request from Australian Information Service, circa 1972.

INFANT DEVELOPMENT IN THE KIBBUTZ. 28 min., color. $25. New York: New York University Film Library, 1972.

KIBBUTZ. 30 min., color. New York: Lawrence Levy, 1973.

KIBBUTZ CARE AND FAMILY CARE—PART I, TWO CLIMATES OF CHILDHOOD. 31 min., b/w, $20, $240; PART II, PATTERNS OF PARENTING, 32 min., b/w, $20, $240. New York: New York University Film Library, 1970.

MATAKANA ISLAND FAMILY PRESCHOOL. 25 min., b/w. New York: Modern Talking Pictures, circa 1969.

MY SON KEVIN. 24 min., color. $31.50, $315. New York: Wombat Productions, White Plains, 1974.

NEW KID ON THE BLOCK. 11 min., color. Seattle, WA: King Screen Productions, 1971.

NEW ROAD, THE. 28 min., color. $25, $160. New York: Cinema Associates Productions, 1974.

1,000 CRANES: THE CHILDREN OF HIROSHIMA. 24 min., b/w. $15, $145. New York: Macmillan, 1971.

REARING KIBBUTZ BABIES. 29 min., b/w. $30, $275. New York: Campus Films, 1974.

SOVIET UNION, THE: A Student's Life. 21 min., color. $290. Chicago: Britannica Films, 1974.

STAY ON STRANGER. 22 min., b/w. On request from Teaching Film Custodians, New York, 1966.

THROUGH MY EYES: KILKENNY. 31 min., color. On request from Australian Information Service, New York.

THROUGH MY EYES: STRADBROOK. 26 min., color. On request from Australian Information Service, New York.

TO PREPARE A CHILD. 32 min., color. $30, $300. Washington, DC: Children's Hospital, NMC, 1975.

VILLAGE SCHOOL. 12 min., color. $10, $120. Cambridge, MA: EDC, 1973.

WHAT RIGHT HAS A CHILD? 15 min., color. $15. New York: McGraw Hill, 1969.

WORKING MOTHERS SERIES OF TEN FILMS. Films vary from 12 to 18 min., color. $20 ea.; $1400 for series; can be ordered separately. Send for brochure to National Film Board of Canada, New York, 1975.